



AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION

421 Aviation Way • Frederick, MD 21701-4798
Telephone (301) 695-2000 • FAX (301) 695-2375
www.aopa.org

April 13, 2001

Docket Management System
U.S. Department of Transportation, Room Plaza 401
400 Seventh Street, SW.
Washington, DC 20590-0001

RE: Docket Number FAA-2000-7953 — *H*

To whom it may concern:

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), representing the interests of over 370,000 aviation enthusiasts and professionals nationwide, respectfully submits the following comments addressing the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) proposal to codify the license application process for launches conducted at non-federal sites. The predicted growth in space launch activities, coupled with the need to insure an equivalent level of safety currently enjoyed at federal launch facilities, makes this a necessary rulemaking action. However, as the largest representative of the general aviation community, AOPA would like to ensure that its members are provided with the most comprehensive information available related to launch activities.

Although such launches are generally considered to be far removed from the general aviation community, the presence of any launch capability, regardless of its location, is an operational and safety issue for the general aviation (GA) community. Because many GA operations are conducted outside of the more highly structured Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) environment, the degree of predictability that accompanies this regime is significantly lessened. As a result, the method of disseminating launch information to the aeronautical community should be a key consideration within the parameters of this proposal. To that end, AOPA requests that provisions be made for the following:

- Launch sites should be depicted in tabular form in the Airport/ Facility Directory (A/FD) that is appropriate for its region.
- The lateral dimensions of the flight hazard area should also be provided in the aforementioned depiction. If the diversity of launch activities at a given site dictates that these areas are inconsistent, that too should be noted and the information provided via Notices to Airmen (NOTAMs).
- Known scheduling information, along with the frequency of the controlling agency, should also be published in a similar format.

01 APR 17 AM 9:19
DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION

Docket Management System

April 13, 2001

Page 2

AOPA recognizes that inclusion of such items may appear small within the context of such a large regulatory document. However, the availability of such information will provide an additional margin of safety by utilizing an existing charting mechanism that is inexpensive and readily available to the aeronautical community. Moreover, the additional cost to the FAA in implementing these additions would be small. For these reasons, AOPA strongly urges that the following safety considerations be included in the final rule.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael W. Brown". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Michael W. Brown
Associate Director, Air Traffic Services
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association